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15 March 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes of Special Group Meeting, 15 March 1962

PRESENT: General Taylor, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Gilpatric and Mr. McCone

Dr. Scoville, of CIA, and Colonel Steakley and Major Moran, of DOD, were also present.

1. Reconnaissance Projects

a. Defense Missions in Soviet Far East

Projects CORVAIR, TEMPEST, RAMBLER, VALIANT AND LARK were all deferred because of the Foreign Ministers' meeting in Geneva. The Group agreed that after Secretary Rusk's return, JCS officers will check with Mr. Johnson as to whether or not these five missions can then proceed. The Group authorized Mr. Johnson to act for it in this regard.

b. Anti-Missile Mission, Kamchatka

Mr. McCone stated that the USIB had gone over this proposed operation and decided not to authorize an overflight at this time, but rather to discuss with the Special Group the possibility of a peripheral flight, as presented to the Group at the 1 March meeting.

After discussion, it was agreed that the peripheral mission would be handled on the same basis as the five listed in a above.

Colonel Steakley and Dr. Scoville said that there is no definite information on the deployment of SU-9's to this area, although they mentioned a bit of collateral intelligence which revealed the movement of certain support aircraft, which in other situations are believed to have been identified with SU-9 deployment.

c. North Vietnam and China Missions

Dr. Scoville gave the Group a summary of weather conditions encountered on the last two U-2 flights in these areas, and

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the enemy reaction. It was noted that as soon as weather permits the additional two North Vietnam flights, which have been authorized by the Group, will be undertaken. The question of another South China mission will await assessment of the results of the last one.

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d. Satellites

The COMOR paper, which recommends the reinstatement of an ARGON mission for May and later consideration of another one, was approved.

Mr. Johnson raised the question of whether the continued mounting of satellite reconnaissance missions is getting to the point where it might lead to potential embarrassment of the U. S. Government. In this connection, he cited the recent article in the British publication Flight. The Group agreed with Mr. McCone's proposal that it consider all the aspects of the problem, with emphasis on the available evidence bearing on Soviet knowledge of these operations. He undertook to have CIA pull this together by next week. General Taylor said he was sure higher authority would welcome such an assessment

e. Anti-Missile Missile

Dr. Scoville gave the Group a summary of the indications received from recent satellite photography bearing on Soviet development of an anti-missile missile. He emphasized that the indications are scanty and deductions from them are at best highly speculative.

Thomas A. Parrott
Original distribution: Mr. Johnson, Mr. Gilpatric, Mr. McCone, General Taylor
Copies to go to: Dr. Scoville, Colonel Beerli, Mr. McCone

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